

senior Thierack, of Munich, on a MS. codex found at Bamberg, contains the conclusion of Pliny's natural history, hitherto considered lost.

Undermining of Streets at Paris.—Subterranean Structures.—About a year ago, the district of Montmartre was thrown in great consternation, as on its east side several buildings seemed more or less menaced by a sinking of the ground. It was asserted, that the slope of the hill of Montmartre had been undermined by the works for quarrying stones, which are carried on to a great extent in and about the French metropolis. The affair became so serious, that the Préfet de la Seine, assisted by the chief engineer of mines (!) the chief inspector of quarries (!) went on the spot to inquire what was to be done. The inquiry, however, shewed that the sinking of the soil was ascribable to the unsystematic quarrying carried on at a previous period. Still, several proprietors received orders to execute immediately some works for staying the damage done. During this and other similar inquiries, the actual state of the Catacombs (this subterranean Paris) has been ascertained, the details of which are very curious. The greatest length of these excavations, counting from their entrance at the Barrière d'Enfer, is one kilometer (two miles.) But from this main line branch off a great many other shafts and quarries; and extend under a large portion of Paris. Some of these works are 5 or even 600 years old, and for ventilating them pits are pierced into the open air. This quarrying is now (very properly) under the surveillance of Government, and no quarry can be abandoned, without proper measures being taken for the safety of the superincumbent earth. In places where there are no houses, the quarry is sunk into itself, if we may say so, by the supporting pillars being cut off, when the roof falls down, and then only the soil thus disturbed is smoothed and planned. If houses exist above, then, of course, the pillars are to be strengthened. The budget of the city of Paris bears every year a sum of 100,000 francs for these works of consolidation. This applies only to quarries, which lie underneath public roads; but if any sinking of soil is to be apprehended on the spot where houses are built, then the proprietors must bear the expense. To find one's way in these galleries, is rather difficult now, although they bear the names corresponding to the streets, and numbers similar to those of the houses above. But their is now a plan in preparation which is expected to be completed in about two years, which will faithfully represent all the ramifications and ganglia of the huge network of subterranean Paris.—*Gazette des Tribunaux.*

Street-cleaning; Regulations at Paris.—Although we know full well, that to lay down regulations and to have them observed, are very different things—still, we believe, that the following notification, issued at the beginning of the present month, by the Préfet de Police of the French capital, will shew what attention is paid to these matters by the French authorities. The *Ordonnance* begins by stating, that the sweeping of the public thoroughfares has to take place from the 1st of October to 31st of March—between seven and eight a.m., and at no other time. The footways are to be scraped, swept, and washed; and the conduits to be kept free from all impediment for the efflux of water, &c. After some other points of usual purport—the Paris authorities say: "For the sake of reforming the habits so contrary to cleanliness and decency, the administration has authorised or caused the construction of urinals in several public thoroughfares, especially on the Place de la Concorde, the Boulevards, and many of the Quays."

Public Recognition at Berlin.—On the retirement of the actual privy councillor, Beuth, the professors and teachers of both the institutions, which owe him their creation, at least vigorous re-organization—viz., the general building school (*allgemeine Bau-Schule*), and the industrial (artisan) institution, have resolved on presenting to that worthy statesman and man a token of their respect and love.

Ancient Canal and Tunnel of the river Kurán, in Persia (Susiana).—The design of those stupendous hydraulic works,—derived from Oriental authors and a minute personal observation by Major Rawlinson (as contained

in one of his communications to the Royal Geographical Society), seems to have been the following. It would appear that Andasbir Bábogán, or his son, excavated a deep and wide canal to the east of the city of Shuster, and thus divided the waters of the river. The artificial stream was derived from the Kurán immediately above the town; but the city, situated on rising ground, between the two arms, could have been but indifferently supplied with water, and a further undertaking, therefore, was necessary to remedy this evil. A massive band or dyke, accordingly, was thrown across the original bed of the river, at the distance of about half a mile from the mouth of the canal, narrow outlets or sluices being left for the passage of a certain portion of the water. The consequence of this was, that the great body of the river was forced back into the artificial derivation. Another band was then thrown across the mouth of the canal, forming, as it were, a continuation of the line of the original bank, and raised precisely to the same height as the lower dyke. Here, too, the passage of the water was regulated by sluices; and the entire bed of the stream being now formed, as it were, into a vast reservoir, the mouth of a tunnel was opened into it (!), which had been excavated directly through the hill of sand-work forming the left bank of the river, between the two bands, and below (!) the level of the water thus artificially elevated. A copious stream, of course, immediately ran into the tunnel, and sufficient water was thus obtained for the supply of the town and the cultivation of a vast tract of country. Before either of the bands, however, were undertaken, and when the whole body of the river must have flowed in the artificial canal, the mouth of which had probably been deepened for that purpose, that part of the original bed between the two dykes which was intended to form the great reservoir was paved throughout with massive lemn stones, fastened with metal clamps, to prevent the further deepening of the river, and to give additional strength and security to the whole work.* Such was this great work in its original conception. But as the course of the river has constantly changed, as either of the dykes became impaired and yielded a free passage to the water, the level of water in the great reservoir must, in that case, have fallen below the orifice of the tunnel, and thus, of course, it has become entirely useless.

CAUTION TO WORKMEN.

A journeyman copper-smith, named Evans, was summoned before Mr. Hardwick, Marlborough-street, for breach of contract with his employer, Mr. Styles, copper-smith, Little-street, Leicester-square. Mr. Styles proved that the defendant entered into a written contract to engage himself for six months at the wages of 23s. weekly. The defendant came to work two or three days, and then left him entirely. The nephew of the complainant proved that he was the means of procuring the defendant employment at his uncle's place of business. He had met the defendant accidentally one morning; the defendant had applied to him to get him a job, alleging that he had left his situation at Messrs. Pontifex's on account of disagreement about money matters. He had taken the defendant to his uncle's shop, and the defendant had obtained an engagement at advanced wages. Mr. Pontifex said the defendant had some time previously engaged himself to him for some months. He had been at work at his shop, and had only gone away for a periodical "fuddle," which generally lasted a week, and it was while on his drunken ramblings that he had been apprehended by Mr. Styles.

Mr. Pontifex said the railroads made the trade so busy, that it was of importance not to lose the services of even one man. He hoped the defendant would be obliged to fulfil his original engagement. Mr. Styles said he had no vindictive feeling towards the man, who was otherwise a good workman, and, when not drawn away by liquor, a steady man. But it was important to teach journeymen that they must not, after having engaged themselves to an employer for a stated time,

leave their work and sport business with impunity.

Mr. Hardwick said the plea of intoxication, even had it been established, would not have excused the defendant's reprehensible conduct in forming engagements and breaking them at his pleasure. In order to teach him that he must not enter into engagements and break them capriciously, to the great injury of employers, he (Mr. Hardwick) would send him to prison for one month. The solicitor said Mr. Styles would of course pay the man his wages all the time he was in prison. Mr. Styles said he would do whatever the magistrate required. Mr. Hardwick looked over the Act, and came to the determination, instead of directing Mr. Styles to pay a proportionate amount of the wages, of cancelling the contract altogether. The defendant was then committed to hard labour for a month.

Correspondence.

BUILDERS' TENDERS.

SIR,—I beg to submit to you the following tenders which were opened on Saturday morning, the 11th inst. at the architect's, Mr. Isaac Bird, 72, Seymour-place, Bryanston-square; they are for alterations at the White Hart, Welworth-road, for Mr. Wm. Williams; the difference is surprising in so small an amount, especially when you consider that the plate-glass will cost 50l.

Cooper and Davis	£225
Cooper	198
Ashby	197
Lawrence	188
Whitaker	138

You see the difference between highest and lowest is 87l. and the accepted, as he intends doing the job, is 50l. under the next lowest.

Would it not pay builders generally, to employ competent persons to make out their estimates rather than guess at their amounts?

Oct. 13.

A CONTRACTOR.

The following letter on the same subject is almost beyond belief: we have, however, received the same figures from four different quarters, so that we cannot doubt their correctness.

SIR,—I take the liberty to forward you the amounts of tenders delivered for finishing ten houses at Mile-end: Mr. Single, architect.

Croast	£1,477
Knight	1,305
Smith	1,250
Rivett	1,194
Johnson	1,192
Simmons	1,130
Cooper	1,129
Hughes	1,124
Cliff	1,060
Keeth	1,060
Symons	1,050
Flume	905
Reed	847
Hawkins	595
Westbrook	589

The tenders were opened in a private room. Mr. Westbrook was called, and, fortunately for him, he was not present; Mr. Hawkins was then called, and told his tender was accepted, leaving him to guess whether he was 3l. the lowest or 300l.; the other tenders were then returned to the several contractors, who, like men of business, opened them amongst themselves. So much for competition.—I remain yours, &c. W.

ORNAMENTAL PLASTERING.

SIR,—In reply to your correspondent, on this subject, he is referred to a work "Practical Masonry, Bricklaying and Plastering, both plain and ornamental," published by Mr. Thomas Kelly, Paternoster-row, London.

The letter-press and drawings for the plastering portion, were supplied by one of the practical stucco workers engaged at Windsor Castle, and therefore can be relied on, the information having been obtained from an experience of several years.

Your correspondent will find, under the head of "materials used for internal finishings," in the work alluded to, the information he required regarding a good composition to work foliage in by hand.—I am, Sir, &c.,

FRANK TURNELL.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 10th Oct. 1845.

* Such of our readers as may study these matters, have to observe that Major Rawlinson says, that the courses of the river and canal are reversed in the otherwise accurate map of Kinnear.